

December 2011 Newsletter

CIRM December Newsletter

- CIRM-Funded "Collaboratory" Opens in San Diego
- Geron Discontinues Stem Cell Program
- CIRM Celebrates Bay Area Science Festival
- CIRM Chair Jonathan Thomas Blog: Progress Toward Stem Cell Therapies
- Lights...Camera...Stem Cells! Video Highlights of CIRM Grantee Meeting
- Target Product Profile (TPP) Workshop Video Now Available
- Upcoming Events

CIRM-Funded "Collaboratory" Opens in San Diego

On November 29th, the CIRM-supported Sanford Consortium for Regenerative Medicine in La Jolla opened its doors during the Stem Cell Meeting on the Mesa symposium. The facility is home to stem cell scientists from five San Diego area research centers. CIRM provided \$43 million to support the \$127 million facility. Another \$19 million came from philanthropist T. Denny Sanford, with the remainder coming from public and private sources. Nicknamed the "collaboratory", the building's interior features 3,000 square feet of glass to ensure that scientists from various disciplines see each other and exchange ideas.



- [Read the blog](#)

Geron discontinues stem cell program, CIRM optimistic about future of stem cell therapies

On November 14th, Geron, Inc announced that they are discontinuing their stem cell programs, including the trial CIRM has supported testing an embryonic stem cell product for spinal cord injury. Geron had received \$6.42 million of their \$25 million loan from CIRM, which the company repaid in full with accrued interest. The decision was made based on financial considerations, not based on concerns about the science. The company says they are seeking partners to continue its stem cell programs. As the first group to receive Food and Drug Administration approval to test human embryonic-derived stem cells in humans, Geron pioneered the regulatory pathway that other groups can learn from.

- [Read a Q&A about the decision](#)

CIRM Celebrates Bay Area Science Festival

On November 6th, CIRM joined 170 other science organizations for Discovery Days at AT&T Park, a huge science fair held at the home of the San Francisco Giants. This event marked the last day of the 10-day Bay Area Science Festival. Hands-on science opportunities were provided for kids and their parents whose attendance reached 21,000. CIRM staff and the UC Berkeley Student Stem Cell Society were on hand to walk the kids through a Play Doh activity that explained how embryonic stem cells are derived.



- [Read the blog](#)

CIRM Chair Jonathan Thomas Blog: Progress Toward Stem Cell Therapies

In his debut as a contributor to the CIRM Research Blog, Governing Board Chair Jonathan Thomas wrote about the progress that CIRM-funded research has made toward developing new therapies. He describes a new summary document available on the CIRM website that highlights 43 research projects that are at various stages along a path to clinical trials for 26 different diseases.

- [Read the blog](#)

Lights...Camera...Stem Cells! Video Highlights of CIRM Grantee Meeting

CIRM posted a three minute video which captured the excitement of the 2011 CIRM Grantee Meeting, held on September 14-16 in downtown San Francisco. The video features "person-on-the-street" interviews with several CIRM grantees speaking about their stem cell research projects.



- [Read the blog and watch the video](#)

Target Product Profile (TPP) Workshop Video Now Available

CIRM posted a video recording of the Target Product Profile (TPP) Workshop held at the 2011 Grantee Meeting and led by Ellen Feigal, CIRM Senior Vice President of Research and Development. The workshop provided an overview of the TPP, a methodology for summarizing a drug development program which can facilitate communication between the drug's sponsor and the Federal Drug Administration.



- [Watch the video](#)

Upcoming Events

ICOC Governing Board Meeting

The CIRM Governing Board will hold its final 2011 meeting on Dec 8th at Cedars Sinai Medical Center. The governing board will be making decisions about funding a Research Leadership Award, and about two additional components of the Opportunity Fund: Bridge Funding and External Innovation. The board will also hear a proposal for an iPS banking program and get an update of progress toward an updated strategic plan. Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting.

- Read the agenda

Spotlight on Disease Team Awards: Heart Failure

Dr. Eduardo Marbán, M.D., principle investigator of the CIRM Heart Failure Disease Team, will present a public seminar about his research project on Dec 8th 12:00-12:45 at Cedar Sinai Medical Center. The seminar will also include a patient advocate speaker.

- Read the seminar notice

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